

Editorial

Arroyo, US imperialism's candidate in the 2004 elections

There are growing signs that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is preparing to run in the 2004 elections. Her factotums in Malacañang and her political allies are hastily preparing for her possible candidacy especially now that time is running out to amend the constitution before the elections. Arroyo had previously hoped to stay in power mainly through a constitutional amendment.

Malacañang wants to make it appear that there is a growing groundswell of support for Arroyo to remain as president. It is her husband Mike Arroyo who has been coordinating hands-on the various campaigns and schemes for her candidacy. Among them is a petition-signing campaign asking Arroyo to run. For this, he uses Malacañang's machinery and funds to secure the support of politicians and local officials and mobilize them in the campaign.

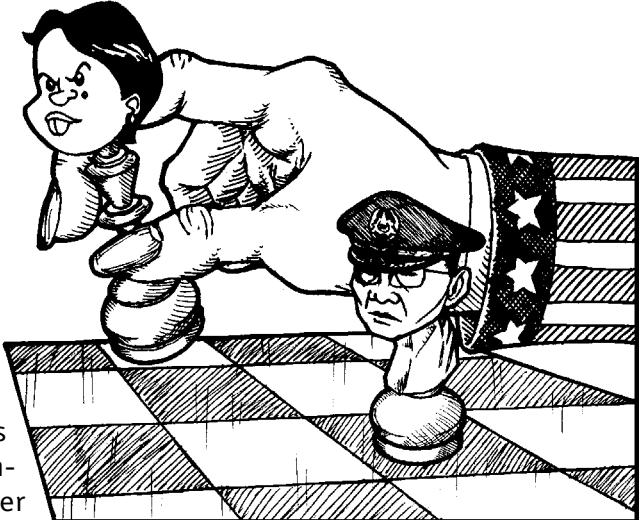
Even the economy's negative rating by a foreign agency (Fitch Ratings of UK) has been manipulated to make it appear that economic policies are in danger of

being disrupted if Arroyo does not run.

Among her propagandists' other schemes is to exaggerate comments made by other heads of state and by big compradors that supposedly favor Arroyo's continuance as president. Malacañang also boasts that US President George W. Bush's lavish welcome for Arroyo during the latter's visit to the White House in May, the US' designation of the Philippines as a "major military ally outside of NATO," the huge increase in US military aid and Bush's endorsement of Arroyo's candidacy in the coming election are portents of good.

It is clear that, for the regime, the biggest factor in Arroyo's candidacy in the coming election is Bush's bloated endorsement.

It is definitely favorable for US imperialism for Arroyo to remain in power. Arroyo's outright and unbridled militarism is in accordance with the ultra-Right policies of Bush's militarist government. Arroyo will ensure the continuous



escalation of US armed intervention in the Philippines until it reaches the point where the direct participation of armed American troops in the country's civil war becomes the norm.

Arroyo's maintenance in power is favorable especially in strengthening US military presence in Southeast Asia. The US can rely on Arroyo to pave the way for setting up a "forward military base" that will be used for rapid troop deployment in the region.

Through Arroyo, there will be no letup in the enforcement of economic policies dictated by the US. She has already proven her boundless devotion to "globalization" and neoliberalism. Arroyo stands ready to completely dismantle the frontiers of national economic patrimony and allow the

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CPP condemns agreement exempting US from ICC prosecution

The Communist Party of the Philippines strongly condemned an agreement between the US and the Arroyo regime exempting American nationals from prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) or any "third country" for crimes against humanity. The agreement, called "Article 98," was signed by Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople and US State Secretary Colin Powell even before Arroyo headed for the US in May.

In a statement to the media on June 3, Party spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said that Article 98 is definitely tied to the objective of further intensifying and expanding the scope of US military intervention in the Philippines. Because US troops and operatives will not be held accountable for their crimes, he said, they will be emboldened to commit unbridled aggression.

Ka Roger also said that Article 98 violates the 1998 Rome Statute which the Philippines signed in December 2000. The Rome Statute, an international agreement signed by 139 countries, established the ICC, which has been tasked to prosecute crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes related to foreign aggression.

The US was previously a signatory but withdrew from it in May 2002. Since

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return of colonial rights for foreign big capitalists.

The Bush government's support of Arroyo is an inducement for her all-out support for the US' "war against terrorism" and its invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in particular. The US can be sure of Arroyo's support for its other plans of armed intervention, including the possible invasion of Iran.

In maintaining its neocolonial power in the Philippines, it is important for the US that whoever becomes president will be a loyal puppet. The president of the neocolonial republic is the chief implementor in the country of US imperialist policies.

In the history of elections in the Philippines, the US has always sponsored the candidate it views as most effective in serving its interests. Nevertheless, the US does not close its door to other candidates favorable to its interests. In reality, all of the reactionary political parties are in agreement with the fundamental policies regarding the puppet-master relationship between the neocolonial republic and US imperialism.

Although maintaining Arroyo in power is favorable to the US, it keeps Gen. Angelo Reyes, the current defense secretary, in reserve. Reyes, who directly receives his orders from the Pentagon, presently serves as Arroyo's handler. Reyes is also the leading official in Arroyo's government pushing the regime's militarist approach in confronting the revolutionary movement.

The reactionary Arroyo regime's militarism and obsequiousness to US imperialism have wrought extreme suffering and harm to the Filipino people.

The regime is thus extremely isolated from the people. Arroyo is hard put getting any genuine support from the people to run in the coming polls.

If voting were to take place now, she will certainly be roundly defeated by other candidates. To win, Arroyo will need the intercession of great "miracles"—widespread fraud and violence and massive US intervention in the election.

Should Arroyo still insist on running in the coming polls, the Filipino people will be granted the opportunity to make her pay dearly for all of her transgressions to the people.



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Three important lessons

(Second in a series of articles about the advance of agrarian revolution in Samar)

In over twenty-five years' experience in advancing genuine land reform in a guerrilla base in Samar, three valuable lessons have been drawn: 1) a solid and deep mass base is built in the process of advancing the antifeudal struggle; 2) the

Party must excel in its tactical leadership; and 3) one must always be ready for the enemy's counterattacks.

FORMING A SOLID AND DEEP MASS BASE. As a result of the development and invigoration

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then, the US has been coercing other countries to withdraw from the agreement or not to sign it. To date, the US has been able to coerce 39 countries into signing Article 98 as a result of its campaign to undermine the Rome Statute's effectiveness. The US has given countries that have signed the Rome Statute up to July 1 to withdraw from it or face denial of US military assistance.

In a related development, Vice President Teofisto Guingona pressed Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople to divulge the full text of Article 98 to the public. He expressed fears that the agreement would cover even American troops who commit ordinary crimes. He also said that Article 98 is a treaty that is beyond the jurisdiction of the executive and should have been referred to the senate for deliberation.

Deception in Mindanao

Malacañang cooks up schemes for Arroyo's visit

Malacañang has cooked up various kinds of deception to cover up the real developments in Mindanao and give the media something pleasant to report with respect to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's week-long visit there this June.

The most glaring item was Malacañang's release of a fabricated letter supposedly from Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chairman Hashim Salamat, stating that the MILF would voluntarily inhibit itself from operating in two towns of Maguindanao (Pagalungan and SK Pendatun) and one town in North Cotabato (Pikit) to convert these areas into "zones of peace." The letter was read during Arroyo's visit to Pagalungan.

In a radio interview, however, MILF chief information officer Mohagher Iqbal strongly denied that Salamat ever wrote the letter, saying it was merely part of Malacañang's deceptive tactics.

The declaration of "zones of peace" is an old tactic of the reactionary government that wrongly portrays the revolutionary forces like the NPA and the MILF as the only source of violence in any area. It is a big hypocrisy because while revolutionaries are forbidden from entering such "zones of peace," the AFP is allowed to come in, sow terror and violate the people's human rights.

In his interview, Iqbal declared that the MILF will, in fact, intensify its offensives because the Arroyo regime has responded to the MILF's deference to requests of peace advocates for a ceasefire declaration (from June 2 to 12, and extended to June 22) with intensified military operations.

Before Arroyo's arrival, internal refugees were also forcibly sent away from the various evacuation centers even as AFP attacks on the areas they vacated have not subsided. Those that remained were given additional food in an utter gesture of hypocrisy. The added rations immediately stopped when Arroyo left.

The DSWD itself has reported that up to 215 civilians have died from relentless AFP operations against the MILF and the Moro people. Of these casualties, 43 or 20% are children 10 years old or younger who have died from measles, pneumonia, diarrhea and dehydration, mostly in the evacuation centers.

AB



of the antifeudal struggle, the level of mass organizations in the guerrilla base was rapidly raised in a relatively short period of time.

After a mere six months of revolutionary work from the first contact with comrades during the last quarter of 1977, mass struggles at the barrio level were initiated. This was carried out despite the fact that only peasant organizing groups (POG) had been set up in most barrios and only a few barrios had peasant organizing committees (POC). The mass struggles included clandestinely reducing land rent, raising farm workers' wages, combatting usury and mobilizing mass organizations as cooperatives, with tasks ranging from undertaking simple forms of labor exchange such as *tiklos*, to launching communal production.

These mass struggles helped immensely in consolidating, strengthening and expanding the revolutionary mass organizations. Because of the concrete benefits attained by the peasant masses from these struggles (*read the previous issue of AB, June 7, 2003*), many more peasants voluntary joined mass organizations or expressed their desire to do so.

Before the end of 1978, organizing in most barrios had been raised to the level of peasant organizing committees (POC) while full-fledged mass organizations (FMO) had also been set up in a number of advanced barrios. By 1979, the FMO had become the norm in most barrios. Together with the development of armed struggle, the antifeudal campaign simultaneously encompassed many barrios. Almost 90% of those who ought to be organized were joining and supporting mass struggles and the armed struggle in various ways.

The revolutionary mass organizations continued to raise their capacity to support the armed struggle.

The antifeudal struggle yielded mass activists and revolutionary masses tempered in the class struggle. In the process of struggle, the masses recognized their own decisive strength born out of their own unity and determination to eradicate feudal and semi-feudal exploitation that has long condemned them to poverty and enslavement. The formerly timid, submissive, oppressed and exploited and fractionalized peasant masses are now rising up, uniting and slowly becoming a powerful force against the landlord class.

The antifeudal base in the area now also serves as a bulwark of legal and open mass actions on a broad-

er scope, including the town centers.

The historic rise of the peasant masses in this and many other similar areas has deep significance not only for the locality where it occurs but also in the overall advance of the national struggle.

EXCELLING IN TACTICAL LEADERSHIP. In launching the antifeudal struggle, it is most important for the Party to exercise good tactical leadership.

With the Party's firm leadership over the step-by-step and sustained advance of the peasant masses' antifeudal struggles, the political and economic power of landlords and merchant-usurers has been weakened in the area. This is manifested in the successful and significant reduction of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and oppression and the dominance of the people's political power in the area.

Comrades have drawn important lessons from both positive as well as negative experiences in the process of implementing the Party's tactical leadership in launching antifeudal struggles in the area:



In order to set the appropriate tactics, sufficient social investigation and class analysis must be conducted in the area. On the whole, comrades and the masses had a grasp of class analysis and the prevailing forms of feudal and semifeudal exploitation in the area. In this way, the overall targets, objectives, policies and steps taken were in the main correct.

But they failed to conduct a more thoroughgoing social investigation and class analysis, and thereby struck against some persons who should not have been targeted. Likewise, it would have been better to deal with some of the targets through democratic consultation and give-and-take instead of engaging them in intense confrontations.

Ensure that any tactic undertaken to advance the agrarian revolution conforms to existing Party policy. This is important to ensure that tactics are based on principle and policy and not merely on subjective wishes or on what is achievable.

Overall, the advance of the antifeudal struggle in the area was in accordance with Party principles and policies. Nevertheless, there were some shortcomings that in the main, resulted from basing tactics merely on the strength of the organization and mass actions and neglecting some actual conditions and practical considerations:



1) Some demands were excessive. For instance, farm workers asked wages that were too high for the rich and middle peasants. The failure to take into account whether such demands were just deterred the advance of production in the area for some time. In some barrios, rich and middle peasants could no longer afford to hire farm workers.

One other example involved the excessive reduction of interest in the desire to eradicate usury quickly and completely deny merchant-usurers any profit instead of accomplishing this step by step. Thus, usurers were discouraged from extending credit and peasants lost their source of capital.

2) Likewise, too confrontational means of struggle should not have been used with some tactical allies, such as a number of enlightened landlords and merchant allies. Instead, it is necessary to exercise self-restraint and do well in conducting democratic consultations with allies. Embarrassing them too much in front of the barriofolk should be avoided.

3) One consolidated mass struggle should have been launched in several barrios dominated by a single landlord adversary instead of advancing such struggles separately and repeatedly.

Ensure that the masses' minds and organization are prepared for struggle. We must ensure that the masses are aware of what the issue is, who the principal and secondary targets and what the form and means of action are.

Overall, this task was effectively carried out. However, there were some shortcomings in this aspect, whereby the following important lessons were drawn:

1) We must always have strong trust in the masses. Giving full play to the masses' initiative hastens the formation of activists and mass leaders.

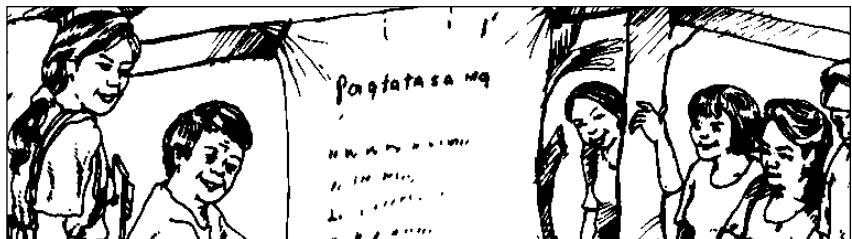
There has been criticism of the fact that in some instances, it was cadres and full-time forces instead of mass leaders who took the lead in facing the targets of open confrontations such as struggles to reduce land rent, raise wages and combat excessive merchant profit.

2) It is important to further develop assemblies as the most effective means by which the masses could directly and democratically participate in their numbers in discussing their problems and forming decisions, and in gathering their ideas and obtaining their concurrence. This way, we avoid limiting the role of the masses to carrying out decisions and calls that are

merely relayed to them by the leaders of mass organizations.

3) It is important to sum up experiences after every particular struggle, aside from summing them up upon the conclusion of the overall struggle. The objective is to attain unity regarding positive as well as negative lessons from each experience and have them serve as guides to future revolutionary actions.

PREPARE FOR THE ENEMY'S COUNTERATTACKS. The enemy has its eyes peeled on antifeudal struggles because they directly challenge, smash and supplant feudal and semifuedal power in the countryside and



are firmly linked to the armed struggle. Thus, from the very start, we must prepare for possible enemy retaliation, especially when feudal and fascist forces conspire to sow violence.

The masses will certainly suffer severely if we fail to adequately consider and prepare for the enemy's reaction, such as what occurred during the antifeudal campaign of 1979-1981, where four of nine landlords collaborated with the military in launching operations. Consequently, eight peasant leaders were slain and many others were tortured by military forces and landlords. In some barrios, where the enemy's assaults had become so intense, the masses were forced to evacuate and live in the forest.

The masses must be prepared on what to do in the event of enemy retaliation, how they should face enemy attacks in an organized way, how they can ensure the security of their mass leaders and what other protective measures they could take.

There are instances when the use of revolutionary armed force or military action becomes appropriate in order to punish despotic landlords who violently and actively oppose the peasant movement.

With the help of the revolutionary masses, the NPA began punishing landlords with blood debts one by one, thereby reducing the number of their victims and neutralizing other class enemies who tended to oppose agrarian revolution and the democratic revolution.



Interest rates on loans reduced, corn prices raised in Isabela and Cagayan

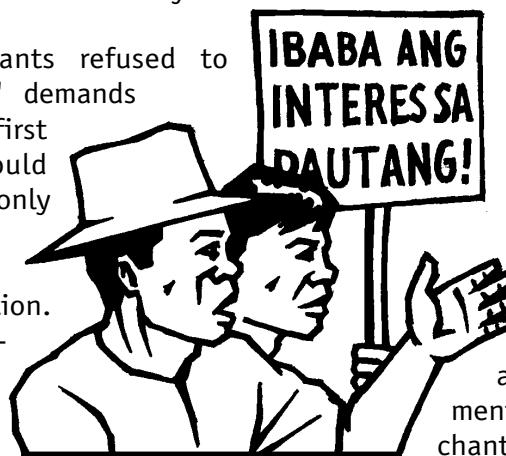
A successful simultaneous campaign has been waged in Isabela and Cagayan to reduce usury and raise the prices of the peasants' produce.

Over a hundred barrios in two towns in Isabela stand to benefit from the reduction of interest rates on loans.

In Echague, Isabela, interest for palay bought on credit has been reduced from 35% to 25% per harvest. This was achieved after peasants dialogued with merchants in the town centers from May 16 to 20.

At first, the merchants refused to accede to the peasants' demands and insisted during the first dialogue that they could reduce interest rates by only 5%.

Up to 500 peasants joined the first mobilization. They distributed thousands of leaflets and hung several streamers along street sides and in



the community centers of ten barrios. They also launched mass meetings.

A number of Sangguniang Bayan councilors supported the peasants' struggle.

In Jones, Isabela, the peasants achieved a 50% reduction in interest rates through a dialogue with merchants on May 26. From the former rate of 8% monthly, interest was reduced to only 4% monthly. Aside from this, the usurers also allowed the peasants to sell their produce to other merchants.

Twenty-one barrios in the towns of Baggao and Gattaran, Cagayan stand to benefit from the successful struggle to raise the prices of corn and reduce lending rates.

The price of corn was raised from P6.00 to P6.60 per kilo. Lending rates were reduced from 5-10% to 3% per month.

The campaign, which started in March, targeted four merchants. Three of them acceded to the peasants' demands after a confrontation on May 6. As punishment, the peasants boycotted Boy Lim, the merchant who refused to grant their demands. AB

9 soldiers from 52nd Recon Coy killed in NPA counteroffensive

Nine elements of the Philippine Army's 52nd Reconnaissance Company were killed in an NPA offensive on May 4 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon in Sitio Ugis, Agaman Sur, Baggao, Cagayan.

The 52nd Recon Coy's ten-man team had been masquerading as an NPA unit as it scoured the area since morning. This was part of a military operation by combined troops of the 41st IB, 52nd Recon Coy and the 117th PNP-Baggao which began March 28.

The operation's objective was to prevent the mass movement to raise the prices of the peasants' products and reduce interest rates from gaining strength. Another objective was to destroy the growth and expansion of the revolutionary movement.

After sustaining casualties, the soldiers of the

Philippine Army unleashed more ferocity and targeted civilians. In the following days, soldiers went on a rampage and victimized

the De la Cruz family, which they intimidated and robbed. They forcibly stuck the barrel of a gun into Herminio's mouth, intimidated and beat up Romeo, and dragged the pregnant Analyn around, whom they suspected of being an NPA member, and even robbed her of P3,000;

Pidong Dominsel and robbed him of seven chickens;

Randy Battala, a barangay councilor, whom they terrorized and accused of being an NPA supporter; and

three youths from Agaman Norte who were punched in the belly after they failed to follow the soldiers' orders to fetch a barangay official. AB

Dean Armando Malay

A patriotic and democratic journalist and human rights advocate

The entire revolutionary movement salutes Dean Armando Malay. Dean Malay became a member of the National Democratic Front during the 1980s. He was a great defender of civil liberties, a leading advocate of freedom and truth in journalism and a tireless symbol of patriotism. He died on May 15 at the age of 89.

Dean Malay was a source of inspiration and courage in the legal democratic movement that for over three decades, has been struggling for justice and human rights from the time of the US-Marcos dictatorship and beyond. He was one of the great antifascists like Lorenzo "Ka Tanny" Tañada, Sen. Jose "Ka Pepe" Diokno, Joaquin "Don Chino" Roces and others who displayed militancy in the face of subjugation by the fascist dictatorship.

Dean Malay was among the journalists who attained the highest respect from their fellow journalists and various sectors of the people. He received the highest honors as a journalist, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Press Club, the

Outstanding Journalists' Award and the Distinguished Leadership in Journalism Award. In 1994, he was also one of those who received the 10 Outstanding Filipinos Award.

He became Dean of Student Affairs at the University of the Philippines during the 1960s and was serving in this capacity when the Diliman Commune erupted—a widespread struggle in 1970 where students militantly barricaded the UP Diliman campus for several days. He praised the students and supported their movement. Since then, he was always endearingly regarded as the "Dean."

The students respected him because of his unstinting support of, and participation in, student demonstrations within and outside the campus to



NPA frees captured sergeant

The New People's Army (NPA) Ruperto Tuyac Command released on June 9 Sgt. Ramiro Lawas of the First Scout Ranger Regiment in an undisclosed barrio in Compostela Valley. The NPA released him to the custody of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which in turn transferred him to the custody of Davao City mayor Rodrigo Duterte as well as Fr. Roberto Batawan and Sr. Annie Oser of the Diocese of Butuan City.

Lawas was wounded and captured on April 4, 2002 in a victorious NPA ambush in Barangay Nabunga, Boston, Davao Oriental. Lawas' entire unit was almost wiped out in the ambuscade launched by combined forces of the 2nd Pulang Bagani Company and the Conrado Heredia Command-Front 20. Ten soldiers were killed and 12 wounded while the NPA did not sustain any casualty. Seized were eight M16s, an M203 and a 60 mm mortar.

In a media interview, Lawas said his wounds were tended by the NPA, who treated him well while he was in their custody. They did not treat me like a captive, he said. He added that due to his long period of integration with the Red Fighters, he now understands why the NPA is waging revolution. "They are here to free the people from oppression," said Lawas.

Lawas also expressed admiration for the camaraderie and equality that he witnessed in the NPA. He particularly praised the practice of criticism and self-criticism. He said that the NPA was really very different from the "bourgeois military." Lawas added that the AFP gave a very wrong portrayal of the NPA to its soldiers.

Before Lawas' release, the military at first reported him missing and later gave him up for dead. He said that the AFP did not exert enough effort to look for or rescue him.

According to NDF-Mindanao spokesperson Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos, Lawas was released on humanitarian grounds. He added that Sgt. Lawas' release and his humane treatment show the NPA's compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), the Geneva Conventions and other international humanitarian laws.

In contrast to Lawas' humane treatment, four *hors de combat* Red fighters were summarily executed by the military in Davao Oriental. Nerio Dioso, 33; Rodrigo Ungayo, 42; Ruben Tanoy, 34; and Ruby Jean Custodio, 21 were captured, tortured and killed by the 4th Special Forces Coy in Sitio Kauswagan, San Isidro, Lupon on June 4.



DEVELOPMENTS OVERSEAS

Liars further exposed and repudiated

protest problems in school and society that were due to imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Dean Malay likened the activism of the students in the face of state fascism to that of the struggle of the Katipuneros in the face of repression from the Spanish colonialists.

When martial law was imposed in 1972, he supported the students' and people's struggle for the restoration of democratic rights.

He joined with other sectors in fighting the fascist dictatorship. He helped organize and became chairman of KAPATID, an organization of relatives and friends of political detainees. He also became Vice Chairman of SELDA, an organization of former political prisoners.

Dean Malay became one of the editors of *WE Forum*, the first newspaper that shattered the censorship and monopoly of the fascist dictatorship in mass media, continuously exposed the abuses and lies of the Marcos dictatorship and persevered in coming out despite concerted efforts by the dictatorship to suppress it. Dean Malay was jailed together with other editors and staff of *WE Forum* and charged with subversion in 1982 because of his writings against the dictatorship, including his exposé in the newspaper of the fakeness of Marcos' 27 medals.

At no time did Dean Malay lose his fighting spirit. As soon as he was out of jail, he joined demonstrators crying out for the freedom of all political prisoners and calling for an end to the Marcos dictatorship. When Marcos' rival, Sen. Benigno Aquino, was killed in 1983, Dean Malay was among the millions that poured out into the streets to fight for the

rights of journalists and freedom for the people. In 1984, he was one of the leaders of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy (NAJFD), a united front of democratic and patriotic forces fighting the Marcos dictatorship.

He also worked closely with Felixberto "Ka Bert" Olalia of the Kilusang Mayo Uno in leading the alliance for upholding the rights of workers. They concurrently chaired the National Alliance for the Protection of Workers' Rights.

Dean Malay had a deep understanding of the need to struggle for national liberation. For as long as his body could take it, Dean Malay joined discussions, protests and demonstrations against the US military bases until they were successfully closed down in 1991.

Dean Malay joined the National Democratic Front, along with other prominent patriotic and democratic professionals, and actively participated in meetings, discussions and study sessions. He wholeheartedly supported the political stand and involvement of his wife, Paula Carolina "Ka Ayi" Malay, who had passed away earlier; and that of his children and in-laws, in the national-democratic revolutionary movement.

Dean Malay was among those who supported the Second Great Rectification Movement in 1992 and actively encouraged other comrades to embrace and advance it.

The Communist Party of the Philippines thoroughly values the contributions of Dean Malay to the revolutionary movement. The Party enjoyed a deep friendship with Dean Armando Malay, a friendship that will forever be cherished and remembered by Filipino revolutionaries.

AB

The absolute illegality and immorality of the war of aggression on Iraq and the isolation from the people of government leaders who pushed and supported it have grown much starker.

This is due to mounting evidence that they lied outright to their own people and the whole world regarding Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the basis for waging war on Iraq. This is now turning out to be the biggest prevarication by the leaders of the US and the United Kingdom since the Watergate Scandal that forced then-president Richard Nixon to resign from office.

There are now calls for the impeachment of US President George W. Bush. This June, the US congress is set to start an investigation into the widespread deception of the Bush regime and the CIA, a fact that his growing political rivals are having a field day over. In the UK, the parliament has also begun its investigation of the anomalies in the intelligence reports used by Blair.

President Jose María Aznar of Spain and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia are also becoming isolated. Par-





ticularly in Spain, Aznar's party lost in the recently held parliamentary election, a signal of his impending repudiation by the people in the next polls.

Some of their officials have been slowly distancing themselves from Bush, Blair and Howard in an effort to avoid being implicated in the exposé of lies and the mounting criticism against them. In the US, many of those who resigned are the likes of Press Sec. Ari Fleischer and some officials of the State Department who were directly involved in weaving the lies fed to the media and the public. Other resigned officials include Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of the American troops that invaded Iraq.



In the UK, over 70 from Blair's own party are up in arms against him. Blair's spokesperson, Godric Smith, has resigned. Earlier, House of Commons leader and former UK Foreign Secretary Robin Cook had also resigned, as with International Development Minister Clare Short and other officials in Blair's cabinet. The chiefs of MI-6 and MI-5, the UK's national intelligence agencies, have also threatened to resign.

In Australia, Andrew Wilke, senior intelligence analyst of the Office of National Assessments (the country's national intelligence agency), has resigned. Prime Minister John Howard has also begun to distance himself from his all-out support of the war, claiming that he was unaware that the information coming from Bush and Blair was falsified. He claims that his government was merely among those deceived by the US and UK. AB

More falsification

One of the most brazen lies that has enraged people especially from the countries dragged into the war is the false evidence that Bush used to terrorize the people about Iraq's supposed production of nuclear weapons.

In his State of the Union Address in January, Bush declared that they had verified Iraq's purchase of a large quantity of uranium from Niger, a country in west Africa. Uranium, the chief component in the production of nuclear arms, was supposedly being used by Iraq to develop nuclear weapons against the US. Blair also included this bit of "information" in a dossier prepared by his government intended to instill fear in the public mind and secure permission to invade Iraq immediately.

But according to the CIA, it had already proven the falseness of such a claim in the early part of 2002. This was immediately relayed by the CIA to Vice President

Richard Cheney and concerned agencies and departments of the US government. Not only was it ignored, Cheney even used the falsified information in Bush's speech and made it a pretext for waging war on Iraq.

As early as September 2002, the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) had also released a secret assessment which stated that "there is no reliable



information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons." The White House concealed this information and put a gag order on those who made the assessment.

Despite this, Bush and US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld brazenly told the US congress that Saddam Hussein had a secret arsenal of huge quantities of chemical weapons that included

VX, sarin, cyclosarin and mustard gas.

In the last days before the US invasion of Iraq, the Bush regime had become so desperate to turn up any evidence of Iraq's possession of WMD. Thus, the Pentagon dispatched a secret commando unit under the Delta Force of the US Army Special Operations Forces just to scour Iraq and search for WMD.

The unit called Task Force 20 was sent to Iraq even before the outbreak of the war. They scoured a large part of Iraq, but could not find anything. In their report, they said that despite searching through numerous warehouses, confiscating several weapons and capturing Iraqi scientists supposedly involved in the production of WMD, they could find no evidence that Saddam Hussein had secret biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

The Bush regime and the Pentagon also kept Task Force 20's report secret but it was eventually divulged to the public. AB



The G8's greed in Africa

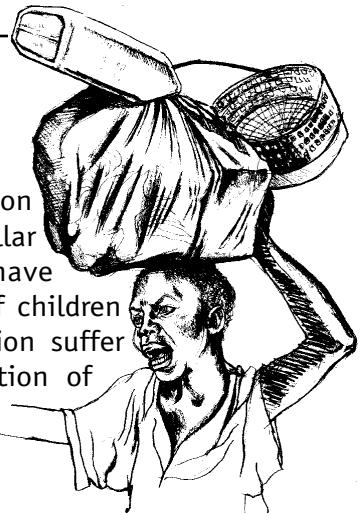
The continent of Africa is rich in many natural resources but it is mired in abject poverty and oppression. Over a long period, many of its countries were either colonies or semicolonies of imperialist countries like the UK, Russia, France, Belgium and Italy.

For centuries, giant imperialist enterprises plundered Africa and siphoned off its natural wealth such as oil, diamonds, gold and other

minerals.

As a result, up to 300 million people now live on less than a dollar a day and over 28 million have HIV/AIDS. Forty percent (40%) of children are unable to study and 200 million suffer from malnutrition. At the instigation of the imperialists, ethnic warfare is also rampant and hundreds of

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Anti-US resistance grows in Iraq and Afghanistan

The US is now reaping the whirlwind from the evil wind it had sown in Iraq and Afghanistan. Instead of achieving stability and security for its interests, the US now faces the people's growing anger and resistance over its occupation of these two countries.

IN IRAQ. The Iraqis' resistance to the occupation of their country by American troops is intensifying. Far from having feelings of jubilation, there is widespread and intense hatred among the people for the US' aggression and its occupation of Iraq, which has caused the death of over 7,000 Iraqi civilians.

Incomplete reports state that over 40 US troops have already been killed since May due to Iraqi resistance to the occupation forces. In the first three weeks of June alone, 13 American soldiers had already been killed and scores wounded.

Firing at US convoys during the night in the areas surrounding Baghdad is now a common occurrence. The attacks, which are coordinated and organized, are characterized by the firing of flares in the darkness as a warning signal for the passage of American troops. These are followed by ambushes. US checkpoints and soldiers on

patrol are also fired upon. On June 12, the Iraqis brought down a US AH-64 helicopter.

Because of the unexpected intensity of the Iraqi people's resistance, the US has launched successive military operations against them. No less than 27 Iraqis were killed in a military operation on June 12, including five peasants who were mercilessly fired upon in their pasture.

The US is now hitting back blindly at an unseen enemy. It launched Operation Peninsula Strike where over 370 people were arrested. On June 15, it launched Operation Desert Scorpion where over 400 people were rounded up from 47 raids conducted by American soldiers in Tikrit, Kirkuk and Baghdad. Many of those arrested were innocent civilians, thus further enraging the Iraqis.

Another indication of the Iraqis' defiant stance towards the US was the poor compliance with a two-week grace period given by the US for Iraqis to surrender their arms.

It is now estimated that over 200,000 troops would be needed to maintain the occupation, up from the 160,000 American and British soldiers that are now in

Iraq.

IN AFGHANISTAN. US forces remain on edge with their occupation of Afghanistan despite over a year and a half of occupation and having put a puppet regime in place.

Apart from rallies against abuses committed by US occupation troops against civilians, armed attacks against American soldiers and the puppet forces of the Karzai regime continue.

On June 3, over 100 Afghan guerrillas attacked militia forces of the Karzai government in Kandahar province, close to the Afghanistan-Pakistani border. The fighting continued until the next day. According to reports, nine puppet forces were killed and six were wounded in the attack. It was the biggest assault on government forces since April when 28 Taliban forces were allegedly killed in fighting also in the province of Kandahar.

The Karzai puppet government unleashed brutal retaliation. During the June 3-4 clash, included among the 40 alleged Taliban guerrillas killed were civilians who were slaughtered by government forces when the Taliban withdrew to their area.

Protests greet CARP anniversary

PROTEST actions in Manila and other parts of the country marked the 15th anniversary of the sham and inutile Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) staged a week of protest actions in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform's (DAR) national office. The KMP demanded President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's resig-

nation because of widespread landgrabbing and intense militarization.

Protest actions also took place in the cities of Iloilo, Cebu, Bacolod, San Fernando in Pampanga and other places. On June 2, members of the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bulacan (AMB) held a dialogue with DAR Sec. Roberto Pagdanganan regarding widespread landgrabbing in his own province.

Anti-PPA rallies held in Panay and Negros

PROTEST actions against the power purchased adjustment (PPA) were launched in Panay along with the commemoration of "Independence Day" on June 12.

Four thousand demonstrators led by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Archdiocese of Jaro, Iloilo gathered in Iloilo

City. Aside from the PPA, the rally also assailed plans to change the 1987 constitution.

Similar activities were also held in the cities of Roxas, Capiz and Kalibo, Aklan. In Bacolod, Bishop Vicente Navarra called for the junking of the PPA and the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

New coalition against "chacha" formed

IN response to a call from Vice President Teofisto Guingona, a new coalition of 36 organizations was formed on June 12 in order to oppose the revision of the country's charter. They signed a manifesto entitled "Preserve, Protect and Promote National Patrimony."

Some of the organizations that joined the coalition include the Council on Philippine Affairs (COPA), Plunder Watch, Bayan Muna, Free Trade Alliance, BAYAN, Silent Protest Movement and Bagong Bandila.

RPA rapists being protected by government

MILITANT groups in Negros criticized the reactionary government for protecting RPA-ABB elements that kidnapped and raped a 15-year old girl.

An RPA unit led by Jecky "Maitan" Casiple kidnapped the victim from the restaurant she worked in, in Silay City, Negros Occidental on May 11. From

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thousands have forcibly evacuated.

Because of intensifying crisis and oppression, movements for change are once again gaining strength throughout Africa. They fight for various causes and range from movements against racism to movements for revolutionary social change.

The eight richest imperialist countries have tried to douse cold water on the people's growing resistance and their efforts to organize. In the recent G8 meeting in France last June 1-3, the condition of Africa was one of the principal items in the agenda. (The G8 consists of the US, the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Russia and Japan.)

As before, they pledged economic support and social welfare to the 53 countries of Africa. The G8 founded the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and invited its members to the meeting as representatives of the entire African continent.

The G8 gave nothing to the NEPAD except promises and assistance tied to liberalization and globalization. In its avarice for Africa's wealth, the G8 is forcing countries in the continent to further open up their economies and lands to imperialist plunder

and exploitation under the aegis of "globalization." This is despite the widespread hunger and inhuman conditions wrought by many years of globalization and liberalization's onslaught on their economies.

The G8 could not even deign to reduce by one bit over \$2.5 trillion in debts that have swamped African countries. Eighty percent of these debts are owed to imperialist institutions like the IMF and the World Bank.

The G8 is also pushing for the sale of expensive medicines instead of reducing patent restrictions on traditional medicines that were merely stolen by giant companies from the rich African forests. Because of such avarice, malaria, TB and polio are still widespread. Aside from this, more and more Africans die from the simplest diseases, their resistance ravaged by malnutrition.

It is also greed that has principally motivated US President George W. Bush to offer \$15 billion in aid to the effort to conquer AIDS in Africa. The only beneficiaries are giant pharmaceutical companies that sell expensive anti-AIDS medication. Bush moreover premised his aid on Africa's consent to import genetically modified foods and crops.

there, she was taken to a fishpond in Talisay City which served as an RPA safehouse and armory, where she was tortured and raped.

POEA pressures ship explosion victims to drop suit

THE Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) has been pressuring the families of nine seamen who are victims of a ship explosion to withdraw charges filed against the ship's owners. The seamen are among the six killed and five injured when the boiler room of the ship

Norway exploded on May 25 as it docked in Miami, Florida, USA.

According to the seamen's lawyer, the POEA warned the victims' families that they would not be given burial benefits unless they dropped their charges against the owners of the Norway.

Church scandals assailed

THE Catholic church has been hit in the last few days by successive sexual harassment scandals. Certain church officials have been accused of using their high positions to take advantage of their victims. Among the church leaders embroiled in controversy are Bishops Teodoro Bacani, Crisostomo Yalung and

Teodoro Buhain.

In the face of this controversy, Fr. Joe Dizon of Kairos, a pro-masses organization of Catholics, has asserted that the church must pay attention to even bigger scandals and social problems, among them the high cost of education, low wages and landlessness.

North Korea defends nuclear arms production

NORTH Korea has admitted to having a nuclear arms production program. In a government statement on June 9, North Korea said that the purpose of possessing a nuclear deterrent is to enable it to reduce its conventional weapons and army. Its avowed aim is to "devote manpower and funds for economic construction and the betterment of the people's livelihood."

North Korea continues to

severely criticize the US threat of aggression against the country. The government's official publication *Rodong Shinmun* assailed the US plan to transfer American troops further away from the demilitarized zone in the Korean Peninsula and provide South Korea with \$11 billion worth of war materiel.

North Korea said these were indications that the US was making further preparations to attack the country.

Myanmar opposition leader jailed anew

LEADING Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi is still imprisoned in a military camp. Suu Kyi was arrested anew on May 30 when government supporters disrupted an opposition rally. Other

opposition leaders are now feared dead.

Suu Kyi won as president during an election in 1990, but the Myanmar military rejected the poll results and instead jailed her.



US presses junking of Belgium's anti-war crimes law

THE US is coercing Belgium to junk a law that allows the country to try crimes against humanity regardless of where they were committed and by whom. This is despite the fact that Belgium had already significantly watered down the law as a concession to the US. Based on an amendment made last April, the accused may be tried in his own country if it has a legal system that could "handle a complaint properly."

As a result of the watered-down law, the cases filed on June 18 against US President George W. Bush, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and other leading officials of the US involved in the aggression against Iraq and Afghanistan were immediately transferred to the US where the cases are sure to be disregarded.

Nevertheless, even if the law's significance is largely symbolic, it still angers the US because it remains a means to expose the US' crimes against humanity. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has warned the Belgian government that the US would not approve funding for the new NATO headquarters in Belgium if the law is not repealed.